

Message Text

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ACTION AID-05

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AF/W FOR AMBASSADOR SMITH

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, IV

SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCES CORPORATION

REF: A. ABIDJAN 10204; B. ABIDJAN 5310

1. DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCES CORPORATION'S (D&R) OPERATION IN IVORY COAST MAY BE HEADING FOR MAJOR CRISIS. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS WITH JAN VAN LEEUWEN D&R LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE JAMES HUGHES (D&R EXPERT TO BE STATIONED IN SAN PEDRO) AND BNETD REPRESENTATIVE (GOIC ENTITY IN PARTNERSHIP WITH D&R FOR STUDIES OF NORTHERN AND SOUTHWESTERN REGIONS), THE FOLLOWING DISTURBING PICTURE EMERGES: A. HUGHES, WHO ARRIVED ABIDJAN FEBRUARY 2 AND IS SCHEDULED TO GO TO SAN PEDRO FEBRUARY 7, IS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING BREAKING HIS CONTRACT WITH D&R AND RETURNING TO STATES. REASONS HE GIVES ARE: VAN LEEUWEN HAS INDICATED HE PLANS TO QUIT IVORY COAST, THUS LEAVING HUGHES OUT ON LIMB IN SAN PEDRO; VAN LEEUWEN HAS NOT ESTABLISHED APPROPRIATE RAPPORT WITH THE BNETD OFFICIALS AND DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE UP TO THE TASK; VAN LEEUWEN HAS MADE NO LIVING QUARTER ARRANGEMENTS FOR HUGHES IN SAN PEDRO WHICH MEANS HUGHES WILL HAVE TO SPEND OUT OF POCKET SOME \$4,000 TO RENT AND FURNISH AN APRTMENT. B. BNETD OFFICIALS ARE OBVIOUSLY DIS-SATISFIED WITH VAN LEEUWEN AND FIND IT INCREASINGLY

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DIFFICULT TO WORK WITH HIM. THEY SATE HE DOES NOT

DELEGATE AUTHORITY, YET IS UNABLE, BECAUSE OF LACK OF TECHNICAL COMPETENCE, TO FOLLOW CLOSELY THE DIVERSE ITEMS UNDER STUDY. THEY ASSERT THAT VAN LEEUWEN APPARENTLY HAS NOT GRASPED THE DIMENSIONS OF THE PROJECT AND HAVE SERIOUS RESERVATIONS WHETHER HE WILL BE ABLE TO ADMINISTER AND COMPLETE PHASE ONE OF D&R CONTRACT. IN ADDITION, THEY BELIEVE D&R IS PROVIDING IVORY COAST WITH "SECOND BEST" CHOICES, RESERVING PRIME CANDIDATE FOR PROJECTS IN OTHER COUNTRIES AND POINT TO VAN LEEUWEN'S ASSIGNMENT AS AN INDICATION OF THIS TENDENCY. BNEDT OFFICIALS CONCLUDED THAT UNLESS D&R PERFORMANCE IMPROVES CONSIDERABLY AND RAPIDLY, PHASE ONE WILL BE IN JEOPARDY AND D&R WOULD PROBABLY NOT RECEIVE CONTRACT FOR PHASE TWO. (SEE REFTELS).

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2. EMBASSY IS NOT IN POSITION TO COMMENT ON VAN LEEUWEN'S PERFORMANCE; HOWEVER, ABOVE COMMENTS FROM INDIVIDUALS WHO SHOULD KNOW ARE DISTURBING. D&R HAS UNDERTAKEN TWO PREVIOUS STUDIES IN IVORY COAST AND ENJOYS--TO DATE--A GOOD REPUTATION HERE. PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY IS APPLYING STRONG PRESSURE ON HIS PLANNING PEOPLE TO MOVE RAPIDLY WITH A MASTER PLAN FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTH. D&R IS PLAYING AN INTEGRAL ROLE IN THIS PLANNING PROCESS AND IF IT FAILS--BECAUSE OF PERSONNEL PROBLEMS-- TO FULFILL ITS CONTRACT, IT AND OTHER US CONSULTING FIRMS WILL HAVE A DIFFICULT TIME IN OBTAINING CONTRACTS IN IVORY COAST. THOSE FRENCH WHO HAVE ACTIVELY OPPOSED ENGAGEMENT OF US CONSULTING FIRMS WOULD, UNFORTUNATELY FOR US, BE IN A "I TOLD YOU SO" POSITION. THUS, FOR D&R INTERESTS IN PARTICULAR AND US ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN THE IVORY COAST IN GENERAL, WE SHOULD DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO ASSIST D&R IN THIS CRITICAL STAGE.

3. ACTION REQUESTED. TUCK KAMINE, D&R VICE PRESIDENT DIRECTOR OF SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA, AND IN CHARGE OF IVORY COAST PROJECT, IS COMING TO IVORY COAST FEBRUARY 16. DEPARTMENT IS REQUESTED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO CONTACT KAMINE TO SUGGEST THAT HE ADVANCE HIS PLANS AND COME TO IVORY COAST ASAP IN ORDER TO EXAMINE PERSONNEL SITUATION AND DISCUSS D&R ACTIVITIES WITH MINPLAN DIAWARA (DIAWARA IS LEAVING IVORY COAST FEBRUARY 12 AND WILL NOT RETURN UNTIL MID-MARCH.) DIAMANTI

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